

PUBLIC SERVICE COMMISSION OF SOUTH CAROLINA

CHIEF HEARING OFFICER DIRECTIVE

DOCKET NO. 2021-66-A ORDER NO. 2021-33-H

MARCH 22, 2021

CHIEF HEARING OFFICER: David Butler

DOCKET DESCRIPTION:

South Carolina Office of Regulatory Staff's Motion to Solicit Comments from Utilities and Other Interested Stakeholders Regarding Measures to Be Taken to Mitigate Impact of Threats to Safe and Reliable Utility Service

MATTER UNDER CONSIDERATION:

Petition to Intervene of Google, LLC ("Google")

CHIEF HEARING OFFICER'S ACTION:

This matter comes before the Chief Hearing Officer on the Petition to Intervene of Google, LLC. No objections to the Petition to Intervene have been filed.

Under Commission regulation, the Commission must determine whether or not the petitioning party has clear factual support or grounds for the proposed intervention. S.C. Regs. 103-825A(3) requires that parties filing a Petition to Intervene in a matter pending before the SC Public Service Commission must set forth clearly and concisely:

- (a) The facts from which the nature of the petitioner's alleged right or interest can be determined;**
- (b) The grounds of the proposed intervention;**
- (c) The position of the petitioner in the proceeding.**

Google clearly sets out the facts from which the nature of the right or interest can be determined, the grounds of the proposed intervention, and its position in this case. Google states that it has a strong interest in the outcome of this proceeding. Google notes that it is a leading technology company and innovator in many fields, including in smart and sustainable energy. More immediate to this proceeding, according to Google, however, are Google's interests as a significant energy consumer in South Carolina. Google operates data centers in several Southeastern states, including but not limited to South Carolina. Google asserts that all of these data centers, both in South Carolina and elsewhere in the region, would be impacted by energy reliability issues, if any, in South Carolina. Accordingly, Google believes that it has a strong interest in participating here and providing its perspective on the importance of reliability to the Commission.

Accordingly, Google asserts that it has a direct and substantial interest in the outcome of this proceeding and will be directly affected by the discussion and resolution of the topics covered therein. Google states that its position and presence relates directly to the details of this docket, in that Google has or will have projects, sites, or initiatives that may be impacted by the decisions the Commission makes following its review and evaluation of South Carolina's power grid and its ability to withstand potentially damaging winter storms and other dangerous weather conditions. Further, Google believes that implementation of any recommendations by the parties will likely impact, either expanding or limiting, deployment of Google products and services in South Carolina.

Google points out that it would add constructively to this matter by clarifying certain issues and contributing to the development of a complete record based on its unique, significant interests in employing its technology to assist power companies, consumers, and others throughout the state. Granting Google's request to intervene in this proceeding, according to Google, is in the public interest, is consistent with the policies of the Commission in encouraging maximum public participation in issues before it and is consistent with the intent of the Governor's request in this Docket. Further, Google believes that its participation will not delay the proceeding in any manner, and that it would fully and cooperatively participate in the manner expected of a party to the proceeding. Lastly, Google notes that its interest in this proceeding cannot be adequately represented or protected by any other party.

Pursuant to these facts, this Hearing Officer holds that Google, LLC has successfully satisfied the criteria for intervention stated in the Commission Regulation. Its interest in this matter can clearly be discerned, as can the grounds for the intervention. Further, its position is clearly stated.

As previously noted, there are no objections to the intervention. Accordingly, the Petition to Intervene of Google, LLC is hereby granted in this Docket. This ends the Chief Hearing Officer's Directive.